Comic Fandom Monthly

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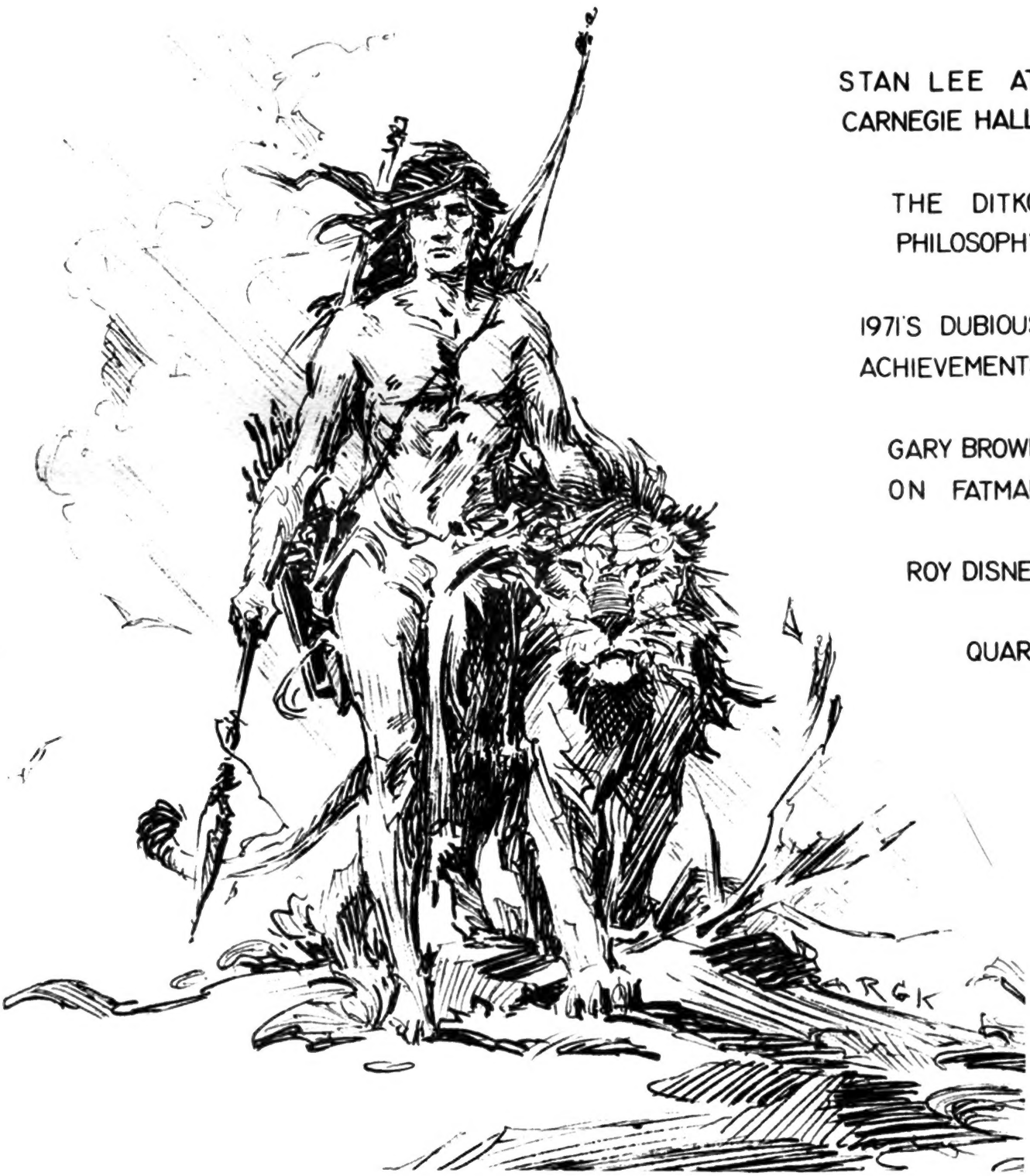


STAN LEE AT CARNEGIE HALL

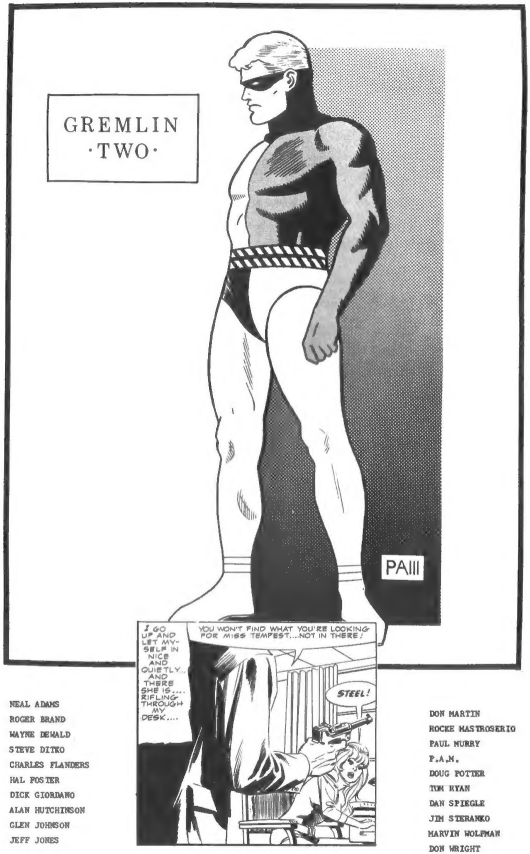
THE DITKO PHILOSOPHY

1971'S DUBIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS

GARY BROWN ON FATMAN

ROY DISNEY

QUARK


GREMLIN
·TWO·
PAIII
I GO UP AND LET MYSELF IN NICE AND QUIETLY AND THERE SHE IS... RIFLING THROUGH MY DESK.....
YOU WON'T FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR MISS TEMPEST...NOT IN THERE!
STEEL!

NEAL ADAMS
ROGER BRAND
WAYNE DEWALD
STEVE DITKO
CHARLES FLANDERS
HAL FOSTER
DICK GIORDANO
ALAN HUTCHINSON
GLEN JOHNSON
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JESUS CHRIST, UNDERGROUND

TOM GREENIONES

Even though it was first printed in 1969, I just recently read *The New Adventures of Jesus* and sequel, *Jesus Meets the Armed Services* soon after. Foolbert Sturgeon's satire here is on a par with Crumb and Shelton's best.

I took so long getting around to them, I was already prepared not to like them. Jesus is an easy subject to bungle. Perhaps moreso than any other familiar character in our culture, the elaborate legend of Christ looms largest. The pedigreed mythology created by the churches over the centuries has unfortunately come to represent the character himself in many minds, creating an added push-pull of antagonism and affection between Christ and the lay. In most satires of him, I would expect the writing to be weak and miss the real humor inherent in the potent ambivalence young people feel towards the son of God. The drawing, I would expect, would lack respect and smother all of Jesus' warmth. The warmth we want to feel for a man who calls himself the Christ.

There are at least three phases of character I see Sturgeon mining for his humor: (1) The rediscovery of Jesus in contemporary terms--putting ourselves in his sandals & experiencing his trip ala *Jesus Christ, Superstar*--the *very man* of Jesus--the anachronism of a man 2,000 years old influencing our lives today.

OHHH! YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO I AM
I THINK YOU KNOW!
MAYBE THIS WILL TELL YOU WHO I AM
MISTER WIZARD
WHO'D'VE EVER THOT YOU'D DROP OUT?
NO! I'M THE MESSIAH!

Christ suffers an identity problem--or at least this cop doesn't know him.

(2) The character as a symbol for the power of the churches. Certainly through history they have in part abused what he really did to further their own establishment. But the revolutionary doctrine Jesus actually spoke can never be handily co-opted for baser ends. Sturgeon shows the absurd *cul de sacs* some of the official interpretations have evolved to. (3) Jesus used as a symbol for our own spiritual potential--that of God in every man. Sturgeon is aware that many people prefer to find their spirituality beyond the frontiers set by their parents or church; particularly in eastern thought, and he releases his portrayal from the confines of Xianity to have its greatest meaning to us as a reference point and sign-post to discovering ourselves.

GOD DAM! EVEN A MESSIAH HAS HIS LIMITS!!!
YOU TURN THE OTHER CHEEK AND THEY WANT MORE CHEEKS!
BUT A MESSIAH SHOULDN'T LOSE HIS TEMPER.
IT SETS A BAD EXAMPLE FOR THE YOUTH.
DON'T PUT THAT BACK ON!
BUT ONE DOES HAVE POETIC JUSTICE TO THINK OF!
WHERE YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

The best examples of how the first theme, the rediscovery of Christ in contemporary human terms, are the stories titled: *Stories from The Good Book* (accompanied by a little figure of Christ reading in a library saying, "This is a really good book.") Many of these vignettes are paraphrasings of parables. If they avoid the gutsy meaning of them, they reawakened in me the sense of wonder I felt as a youngster hearing those tales of guys raised from the dead, walking on water, telling off the elders in the temple, talking to God in person, and all that other neat stuff.

Mr. Foolbert also echoes our disbelief at what Christ was like and the suffering he willingly underwent. In "Jesus Gets a Ride" he is shown as a crude and egotistical huckster rather than any sort of gentle poet. Clergyman (driving car): "...if only I

could receive a sign!" Jesus (appearing spontaneously in the rear seat): "You guys give me a pain in the ass! Why can't you decide whether you want to be superstitious or reasonable?" Clerg.: "I simply want to understand. It's all so complex and apparently contradictory. The ways of the Lord are devious!" Jesus: "heh, heh, heh! You mean were devious! Haw! Haw! I killed the sonofabitch myself! How did you think he got to be the holy Ghost?" Clerg. "Gosh! Wow! Why did you do it?" Jesus: "What would you have done? That omnipotent asshole! He knocked up my mother and disappeared! And I was born in a stinking stable! With a bunch of chickens and pigs. We never saw him again! What do ya do with guys like this these days!"

OKAY, NOW, TALK, YOU CREEP! WHERE'S YOUR HIDEOUT?
NO HABLA!
YOU HABLA AS WELL AS I DO, PISSANT! WELL, HAVE IT YOUR WAY! I DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR RESOURCES TO RUMA TAN.
THINK YOU WOULD LIKE ME CHANGE?
GLUP!
GULP!
GULP!
GULP!
GULP!

Christ was not always portrayed as a poet and philosopher. Here he feeds devil to dogs because he wouldn't tell where hell was.

There's also a great parody of the scene in the Garden Of Gethsemane. Jesus talks to the Lord, addressing him as "Dad", and gets the ultomatoe about having to be crucified. He can't believe his own father would do this to him: "...couldn't you just cut off my allowance or something?"

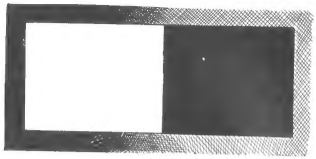
On the theme of the church co-opting Jesus as star player on their team, Foolbert sketches in just two pages the strange bedfellows of monied religious institutions and the revolutionary de-materialism of Christ's teachings. It's another "Story from The Good Book", this time about the guilt ridden rich man coming to Jesus for consolation about his wealth. Rich Man: "Hello, Jesus, I want to go to heaven, and I hear you're the man to see!" "It's not as easy as you think," Jesus retorts. He gives the man the straight dope on renouncing the whole bit and following him. Then he gives him the clincher,"In fact, it would be easier for a camel t'pass through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter the Kingdom Of Heaven!" The man, who was only looking to buy his way into the "in" group, looks disconsolate. Jesus continues,"I'll tell you what I *will* do... I'll change you into a camel!" The rich man enthusiastically agrees to this compromise to an impossible situation, and is changed into a camel. He thanks Jesus, who replies,"Think nothing of it! See if you can find a needle." This points up a visible absurdity. I have travelled from suburbia to a pew where I've had to ante up in the offering plate supposedly subscribing to the sermon I've just heard telling me this is the AllRite thing to do, has made me feel like nothing more than a compromised camel.

Really funny! Often evangelists seem to encourage this confusion by coupling Jesus with commercial enterprises. Believe me, Sturgeon gets it all in his accurate satire of *The Greatest Story Ever Told* movie taken to its Nth degree of popular American values. Mr. Foolbert even ends the bit with Jesus agreeing with the excited audience that the film ending of him beating up the Romans and winning Mary Magdalene was better than the book. Quite an editorial comment on

CONT PAGE 7

YOU MUST HAVE A BIRTHDATE TO REGISTER WITH THE SELECTIVE SERVICE ACCORDING TO THE LAW. IF YOU CAN NOT SUPPLY US WITH ONE YOU WILL BE ASSIGNED A BIRTHDATE!
HOW ABOUT JULY 4TH?
HOW ABOUT SEPTEMBER 14TH?
OKAY, WHAT'S IT MATTER?
THAT MEANS THAT YOU ARE NUMBER ONE ON THE PRIORITY LIST. YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR PHYSICAL THREE WEEKS AGO!
CAN I CHANGE AGAIN?
TO WHAT?
OH, HOW ABOUT FEBRUARY 14
THAT'S SWEET, BUT IT MEANS YOU'RE NUMBER EIGHT. YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR PHYSICAL TWO WEEKS AGO!

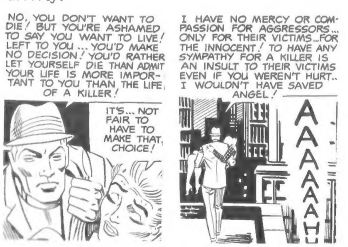
THE DITKO



PHILOSOPHY

Back in the early days of *Witzend*, which wasn't half as long ago as it feels, Steve Ditko was doing some pretty good work for that fanzine to the tune of his own philosophy. Being a fanzine reviewer at the time, I was struck by the number of fanzine editorials and letters which stated their dislike, and often disgust, with the philosophy presented by Steve Ditko. Most were in reference to his *Mr. A* strip.

Going back over many of the one-pagers in other zines, and the longer ones in *Witzend*, I began to pull out some basic parts of Ditko's philosophy. Steve Ditko very definitely is for law enforcement in the same manner as shown in Clint Eastwood's *Dirty Harry*. Law enforcement and people's rights here are equal. When one person is in the wrong,such things as not reading a person's rights and torturing a hoodlum should not interfere with the conviction and punishment of a criminal. *Dirty Harry* says that, and Ditko would probably agree. Ditko has made his own stand on this matter crystal clear through his *Mr. A* strips. The bad get what they deserve. Ditko could have written parts of *Dirty Harry* without a twinge of uncomfortability.


NO, YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE / BUT YOU'RE ASHAMED TO SAY YOU WANT TO LIVE! LEFT TO YOU... YOU'D MAKE NO DECISION / YOU'D RATHER LET YOURSELF DIE THAN ADMIT YOUR LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN THE LIFE OF A KILLER!
I HAVE NO MERCY OR COMPASSION FOR AGGRESSORS... ONLY FOR THEIR VICTIMS..FOR THE INNOCENT! / TO HAVE ANY SYMPATHY FOR A KILLER IS AN INSULT TO THEIR VICTIMS EVEN IF YOU WEREN'T HURT.. I WOULDN'T HAVE SAVED ANGEL!
IT'S... NOT FAIR TO HAVE TO MAKE THAT CHOICE!
AAAAAH

Ditko also has a great attachment to what he feels is his. In this respect, he feels he should keep what he earns while playing by the rules. In related manner, he speaks out against welfare as something that takes money from someone who earns it and gives it to someone who doesn't bother to work to get it. He regards communism similarly. To Ditko communism is something that is trying to displace democracy, something that has been earned. It is interesting to note though, that he never mentions either communism or welfare specifically by name.

I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY--HE DOES!
THIS MONEY BELONGS TO ME!
BUT I NEED AND WANT SOME MONEY!
GO EARN IT HONESTLY LIKE I DID!
WHY SHOULDN'T I HAVE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE?
WHY SHOULD OTHERS BE FORCED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH IT?

However, perhaps Ditko's most intriguing theory is that of the neutralist. Specifically, the neutralist's role in the balancing of good and evil. Here, Ditko the philosopher, takes the stand that either you are helping the 'good' or helping the 'bad' cause. There is no middle. Good or bad men. Black or white. (This of course has been highly developed in *Mr. A*.In *Mr. A*, where Ditko is not forced to tell a story, the conflict of a black/white society is the

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paramount issue. Mr. A fosters the philosophy you're either good or bad. No middle area. On the other hand, in his professional, strips like *The Question*, *Hawk and Dove* and others, the good/evil as absolute is submerged in the background. It is best developed in the *Question*. He is the man who'll go off the air rather than accept sponsorship of a known crook (*Mysterious Suspense #1*).

Ditko is for democracy. This goes along with this good/evil philosophy. Explaning it is not easy. Person A is against democracy. Person B has no opinion in either direction. Ditko is Person C. He is for "good". He is a democracy man. Person A is definitely against him. He overty fights Ditko, tearing-down Ditko and democracy. He is a known and fightable enemy. Person B is a different story. He neither acts for or against Ditko and person B neither acts for or against Person A. Here is the tricky part. Whereas most people would find nothing wrong with the neutralists' attitude, Ditko views it as a threat. By not aiding Ditko, or helping squash his opponent, the neutralist is allowing the enemy to continue unhindered with his activities. So, according to Ditko, he is an enemy. By trying to tread neutral waters, he unwittingly casts his lot with his enemy. To Ditko then, you're with him or against him. It's a logical arguement, and although out of vogue at the moment, this view will remain as one with popular support for years to come.

Steve Ditko comes out as a man who believes in fighting for what he believes to be good. His good includes the rights of a citizen as well as democracy. He believes also in making others take a stand. Personally Steve Ditko remains an enigma. He is relatively inaccessable as a man, but as a philosopher he is well known. Few if any artists, can get so much into one panel.

Many have said Ditko is out of touch with reality, that the days of black and white justice and morality are gone. The age of grey is upon us. Denny O'Neil once said that his big problem is getting grey characters into a medium that demands winners and losers at the end. The comic code, like mom and apple pie demand "good" guys always win. As O'Neil finds problems, so does Ditko. Ditko looks at a world immersed in grey and cannot endorse it. His "good" characters always win but they are Spartan victors. Absolute victors. Their roses are sweeter. Too sweet for some.

In a world that has immersed itself in insecurity, grey and neutrality, Steve Ditko presents a clear-cut winner. Too clear for many. Perfection, they say, is impossible. Ditko disagrees. ---Wally Stoelting

JESUS CHRIST, con't.

the flaws of judgement in the land we live in. As good as this is, there is more for the asking.

The third theme, that of Jesus' message, to be aware of the light within each of us and our potential to reunite with god, is the most intriguing to me. Foolbert plays this down in his stories to best effect though. In *Jesus Meets The Armed Services* the humor comes not from the obvious ridiculousness of an almighty God bullied by an earthbound establishment, rather Christ is shown in the archtypical situation that many young men find themselves in when confronted by the draft; that of suffering gross indignities to their personal sanctity as human beings. The story shows Jesus as the model of peace and tolerance, up to a point, where at the end, in the obligatory scene he gets mad and wrecks the whole place. He thus breaks with the whole system.

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So, in conclusion, I feel that these two books by Foolbert Sturgeon, the only two books complete by him I know of, are very funny and well worht your attention. He is funny in the right places and is aware of the higher purpose he must fulfill of making Christ more familar to us again on our terms so that we may be more receptive to his message.

Amen!

Stan Lee at Carnegie Hall:

JAKE JENKINS

DID FUNKY LIVE?

Does Funky Flaskman really live? That question ran in and out of our mind several times while covering a somewhat enjoyable, somewhat ridiculous, but still marvelous evening with Stan Lee. Together with some fine personalities, and the musical talent of Chico Hamilton and his group, the evening was more than just Stan Lee. And though the audience had no taste for Chico's music, we thought it made the show. They opened the show with a short number and then Lee took over. Stan came on stage with a roar of applause, and began:

"For people who might have decended from Mars recently, picture if you will a vast sprawling metropolis. Picture if you will a vast industrial conglomerate located inside, of that metropolis named Cadence Industries. Now this conglomerate consists of many divisions, one of which (and we are zeroing in on the topic) is called Magazine Management Company. I know the suspense is overwhelming, but you're gonna have to hold on. Now then, Magazine Management has a division a gleaming little jewel of a division which publishes (if you will) comic books. A division called Marvel Comics." Lee ended quite abruptly, as if he knew in advance that the roar of applause would come. We just sat back laughing. Laughing how closely Stan Lee resembled Kirby's Funky Flashman.

His ramblings were typical Funky rambling and he ended the rest of his speech with "At this moment, I think we need a little move, so can we have some music...Chico!" Typical Funky Flashman, eh? After this rather comical opening (that was meant in all seriousness) came the first of twenty episodes and a clash bang ending. The first episode was about the Hulk and it was appropiately entitled "Hulk Episode". Stan, Herb Trimpe (famed for his often inept rendition of Hulk that has caught the eyes of the kiddies who say whether a comic lives or dies), and TV personality and known comic-lover ChuckMc Cann did the episode. Herb drew a picture of Hulk on acetate which was shot up on to a projection screen. As the audience watched, the gruesome and somber features of the Hulk Chuck McCann told his story. He discredited the Hulk, speaking of his incredibly bad breath, body odor and fangs that would/can give an orthodontist nightmares. He then speaks of how kindly the Green Man actually is, "He really is a joiner" having been with the Avengers for a whole of two issues, and now the Defenders.

As Chuck received his well earned applause the music skidded up a bit, and Herb, who had come on the stage through a trap door in the stage, leaves via the same entrance. (Must they add mystery to this nonsense?) Soon after they depart, Stan comes out again for the Giant episode, in which nine-foot-eight inch Eddie Carmel frightens our fearless Flashman who poses some inane questions such as:

"Are you going to put your hand through a wall? Are you going to break a chain in half?"

Eddie simply replied, "No, Stanley, I'm going to recite a poem about my kid brother

(Lt. to Rt.) Stan Lee, Herb Trimpe, John Romita and Barry Smith. Photo Credits: COLD DUCK (Lee), ROLLING STONE (Trimpe), ACBA NEWSLETTER (Smith).

'LEE'

the Hulk!"

Following Eddie's rather touching, but uneventful poem came another Marvel artist from the dungeon and the "Thor Episode". The artist, John Buscema drew to no one's amazement, the Thor. Would you expect him to draw Surfer in the Thor Episode? Out from the darkness came Earle Doud, (disc jockey on a New York rock Station). He talked highly of Thor on and on and on. Almost happy to see him go, we put our efforts into watching the Thor being drawn by John Buscema. A beautiful, rather sketchy non-color piece. Next to arrive from the dungeon was John Romita, who while getting applause, was quickly scared away, by someone calling him a fink.

Ever present, Stan said, "Who are you?"

"J. Jonah Jameson," he roared back!

"You don't look like J. Jonah Jameson" said Stan.

"That is why he's a fink, he doesn't draw me right!" Original, eh?

Out of a seeming nowhere came another nut but he was a full-dressed superhero. We need not tell you who, but for the unimaginative he was Spiderman,who chased off the grouchy J.J.J. We later discovered it was comicdom's favorite writer, Roy Thomas, in the superhero get-up.

Next (as if you hadn't guessed) came the Spiderman episode. A slide show with Spideys origin was shown. Rene Auberjon's recited the origin, mentioning Spider-Man really does still court a bad case of acne. It's not seen because it's covered by the artist. ('Nuff Said) In any case, the early Spider-Man panel did look exceptional on the large screen.

After this boring session came what proved to be the highlight of the evening. Illusionist Geoff Crozier. He came up three times after this, each time better than the first. This Aussie has talent. His first act accompanied with music by Chico and the players, had to do with floating balls and a magic wand (which unfortunately broke). It was still fantastic.

After this, Steve Friedland played the electric organ and sang a song about Marvel. It praised Marvel and all to do with it quite highly, and thankfully, we don't remember the lyrics. Soon after this ridiculous song, came author Tom Wolfe (replete with white suit). John Romita returned to draw on the big screen a rather badly shaded, out of proportion Captain America. I was unhappy to see this poor piece of art come about since we're fans of Johnny's and this was a rather big affair. We were hoping to see some of his best work, not some of his worst. We've seen him do better sketches for fans at conventions. Despite this disappointing art, this episode was by far the best of those dealing with Superheroes.

Captain America episode #2 was not as good though it wasn't the worst of the bunch either. In this, Stan took the microphone. He spoke of Steve Rogers as scenes of one of the greatest characters ever was flashed on the screen. The item that made us laugh was that *none* were Jack Kirby renditions.

Crozier came up for the twelfth episode, in which he placed swords in his female assistant's head, through what appeared to be a wooden box. After bored looks, and little applause, he left and Stan took the microphone to give us some good news and some bad news. The bad was that Zacherle (the ghoul of all ghouls and New York DJ) couldn't make it. He had, however, enlisted his good buddy Alex Bennett to sub on the Doc Doom episode. We assumed that was the good news. The amazing Australian, Geoff Crozier then returned, with an act called Illusion Cane. It was good up until the point where the cane too broke in half. Halftime intermission was next, and was rather short. After intermission Crozier came back again. This was his

Roy Thomas was writer turned rock and roll-- or what they said was rock and roll--singer-star. Photo: ACBA NEWSLETTER. No pictures of the evening itself were allowed!

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last and most startling act. In this one entitled Fire Act, he imposed upon his girl assistant to sit motionless on a chair while he set her hair on fire, and her face too. He used what looked like a metal rod. After allowing her to burn for a few minutes, he gave her a kiss and put out the fire. Instead of the expected charred face we had seen only moments before, the girl stood up with out a mark on her. He then began to do old, but fantastic, fire stunts.

The next episode was as meaningless as some of the others, entitled Silver Surfer. Large Surfer panels, both Kirby and Buscema, were flashed upside down, right side up you name it. As this happened, Stan spoke how the failure of one of his favorite character came about. He tried to appeal to everyone , both young and old with the Surfer, but apparently the minds of children aren't interested in a Silver man who rides around on a surf board and cries about his world, his people and his girl. French director Alan Resnais, did some readings from a Surfer

LEE, CON'T

tale. Resnais is a good friend of Lee's, and he's doing a movie around a twenty page poem that Stan had written. The poem covers all areas of life, people, psycology, etc. Stan Lee's wife and daughter did small excerpts from the poem after the Surfer episode. The poem didn't have anything to do with comics or Marvel at all. It was from the same mediocre mold, however.

Chico Hamilton, who had gotten the stage only one time before, took it again, as each of his group got in a small solo, five minute piece. Chico ended it all, trying desperately, but unsuccessfully, in trying to get the audience up and moving. One part of the segment annoyed us the most, that being when Chico's girl singer got up to do a solo, a large portion of the audience let off with hooting parrot and monkey noises. They were apparently unfamilar with her music, and most immature. It is unfortunate that this rag-tag audience knows nothing but Stan Lee. They missed some outstanding music while making fools of themselves, Lee and all comics fans.

The next four episodes brought together and wrapped up the "Marvelous evening with Stan Lee." Stan called up Roy Thomas, and then Roy took the mike and got Barry Smith and Herb Trimpe on guitars, and Milton Forest on drums. Thomas then started going at rock and roll like it was his business, doing a song called *I'm Down*. It wasn't his business. The music was bad and Roy had best stick to writing. We admire his guts. Then Stan, who was off in the background, came out being chased by Dr. Doom. He catches Lee and takes him away. We were hoping Doc Doom had finally won one. In any case, Roy hit out with another old favorite "Bee-bop-a-lu-op," completely ignoring his mentor's problem. Then, like a voice out of nowhere, Stan says that if the entire audience starts to believe in him and Marvel, he will be saved! Then the words of "The Merry Marching Marvel Society" flash on the big screen and Roy calls everyone up on stage. Then with his hand on his heart, he leads the crowd in the song. Everyone mobs the stage and the show is OVER! One wonders whether anyone even bothered to wish hard enough for Funky. Laterria here I come.

Overall, we were impressed at Stan's legions of followers, living and dying on his every word. The evening, at best was mildly entertaining, and at times, pure unadulterated pap and tripe. It was never the less a Marvelous evening with Funky. It led us to wonder, though, that besides being a good writer, and great illustrator, whether Jack Kirby was a prophet, too?

BY A.G. HOST

Local Strips Bloom

Sacramento Union artist Clyde Lewis has tasted his share of success over the years, but his best break he ever got was at the 60 mark when most cartoonists retire or are giving serious thoughts to doing so.

Lewis is into his 14th month as creator--of America's only known sunday color comic strip produced solely for a local audience--for the people of Sacramento.

Called "The Sacramentans," the strip is featured each week in the *Sacramento Union*, where it appears as the lead panel of a 16-page tabloid comics section. Although the strip was conceived as a fun item, Lewis has increasingly found city landmarks and political figures creeping into the strip. In the strip here, Gov. Ronald Reagan was walking around the capital with a bag of jelly beans to offer a couple of kids who lost money in a vending machine. One may wonder what in hell Reagan is doing running around the capital with a bag of jelly beans. But that's California's problem, not ours.

Also appearing at various times are Sacramento's mayor, Richard Marriot, local TV personalities and the paper's various editors. Landmarks such as Sutter's Fort, The Governor's Mansion and the Sacramento Zoo have appeared at intervals too.

the SACRAMENTANS
by Clyde Lewis
Sacramento Union
THESE BOURBELLS ARE ALWAYS HUNGRY...
CAPITOL PARK
SHUCKS! WE'RE ALL OUT OF PEANUTS!
I THINK THERE'S A PEANUT MACHINE IN THE CAPITOL
WOULDN'T THIS FROST YOUR CAKE? I THINK THIS MACHINE IS ON THE BLINK!
BY GINGER, IF I DON'T GET MY PENNY BACK, I'M GOING TO CALL THE SHERIFF!
I'M SORRY, THE PEANUT MACHINE IS OUT OF ORDER, YOUNG MAN... MAYBE YOU'D LIKE SOME JELLY BEANS?
NO, THANK YOU, MISTER... BUT IF MY MOTHER CAUGHT ME TAKING CANDY FROM A STRANGER, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SIT DOWN FOR A WEEK!!

Lewis launched his cartooning career shortly after attending a Chicago art school in the early 1930's. In 1932 he became an editorial artist with the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* where he worked for V.T. Hamlin on Alley Oop. After a few months with Hamlin, Lewis created "Hold Everything!" a gag panel which at its apex was syndicated in over 225 papers. In 1937 he invented a strip for N.E.A. called "Herky." It was short for Hercules who had super human strength. He also had a propeller Beanie and caught some attention during the depression.

Lewis then joined King Features Syndicate, where he created still another comic strip, "Snickeroos." Snickeroos became so filled with servicemen that he finally changed the strip's name to "Private Buck." The strip picked up strength during the war and reached almost 130 newspapers.

Lewis was also quoted several years ago with a story as to the origin of the character "Sad Sack," who now appears in comic books. He and Ernie Bushmiller of "Nancy" were judges in a USO cartoonist contest. Lewis personally encouraged an army private, name Baker, George. Baker won the contest, and, his drawings of a slouchy, dog-faced man became today's Sad Sack.

Sacramento isn't the only city to have a local strip, either. The

CONT PG. 37

ROY DISNEY DEAD

The man who parlayed his brother's talent and $790 into an empire is dead. He was stricken with a cerebral hemhorrage at St. Joseph's hospital in Burbank, California and died December 20. He was 78 years old.

Disney's acumen built an entertainment empire on his brother Walt's talent for drawing talking animals and for making dreams come true. Roy Disney inherited the Disney empire of enter tainment, and was its chief moving spirit, following the death of Walt Disney in 1966 from cancer. His official title was a fancy one, Chairman of the Board and chief executive officer. Others saw his real function, however, was "Keeper of the Spirit that Walt Disney created, and that permeated their cartoons, movies, television shows,amusement parks and other enterprises."

ROY DISNEY'S WORLD

After Walt's death five years ago, Roy embarked on the Disney Corporation's most ambitious project ever. It was to be called *Walt Disney World* as a monument to his dead brother. The basic concepts was similar to that of Disneyland in Anaheim, California, but everything else was unique. The project, according to some experts, cost well over $400 million dollars to produce. The conception was turned in to reality in October of 1971. The site in Orlando, Florida, garnered tremendous publicity. It was not only a monument to Walt, but to the financial genius--and dedication--of Roy Disney.

For the most part, however, Roy Disney stayed out of the creative end of the business. Before and after Walt's death, his primary concerns were economic. As an artist the creative shoes of his late brother went unfilled. The ideas kept coming, he once said in a United Press interview that he'd a "good organization Walt built, and who would not want us to change."

THE EARLY YEARS

The story of Disney's meteoric rise to success is well-known. It's often blown out of proportion. The story of the found - ing of the empire, according to a Disney official I talked to, went something like this:

Roy Disney was the initial backer.He lent his brother $250, who added $40 of his own. Walt also added his early artistic talents to the partnership. They opened a small cartoon shop in Hollywood in a small building behind a real estate ofice in 1923. An uncle lent them an additional $500 for working capital.

In those early years, Walt drew the pictures--starting with a character called Oswald Rabbit --while Roy worked the camera and kept the book. He did both with a rare skill. Unfortunately, Disney did not own Oswald Rabbit and the copyright was reclaimed.

Necessity being the mother of invention, Disney produced *Steamboat Willie*, and introduced the moon-faced, gloved, three fingered mouse, Mickey. Walt drew around him, and with the aid of such talents as Carl Barks and the late Ub Iwerks, he created hundreds of other characters. Minnie Mouse, Pluto, Donald Duck, Scrooge McDuck all followed in rapid succession. In the meantime, Roy Disney made the $790 grow into a financial empire estimated as high as $750 million.

The Disney brothers were children of a Canadian-Irish immigrant named Elias Dis - ney and were born & raised in Chicago. They also lived in Marceline, Missouri. Before becoming a partner with Brother Walt, he was a bank clerk for eight years and served as a petty officer on a navy cargo ship in World War I. Disney is survived by a wife, Edna; a son, Roy Edward, who is a producer at Disney productions and a board director; a brother Ray; a sister, Mrs. Ruth Beecher, and four grand children.

---Joe Brancatelli

of *Sgt. Fury* (#96) knocked me out. It is an exceptional piece of work with an angle shot that works better than any angle shot I have seen on a cover before.

Well, looking back, that wasn't too awful a discussion, but I still think I'm going to continue to emphasize comics writing. While I would like to see a regular column on comic art, I wouldn't like to write it. If you ask Joe real nice, maybe...

***

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MIKE PLOOG'S WORK ON *WEREWOLF BY NIGHT*?

I try not to. (Sorry, one serious set of comments on artwork are all I can manage per column.) I'm sorry, gang, but that magazine is such a disaster I don't even want to talk about it. The writing is bad, the artwork's little better, and the concept is weak. Who asked for *I was a Teenage Werewolf* in comics format? I hope Marvel makes some cash on it to prevent it from being a total loss.

***

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF CARY BATES' WRITINGS FOR *THE FLASH*?

I haven't really made up my mind yet. He has come so close to winners so often I keep expecting him to make it the next time.

Examples: "The Flash--Fact of Fiction"--issue #179--had some great gag possibilities with the Flash in our world. Cary ignored a majority of them, including having Barry put in an appearance at a comics con.

Issue #209's "Beyond the Speed of Death," his first recent story, promised the returns of two favorite Flash foes. These foes, and Grodd, were relegated to the background.

Issue 210's "An Earth Divided" had great, things in it. The Lincoln robot was able to steal the stage from the Flash. It was hurt by its dependence on the ridiculous story by Bob Kanigher that made Iris a freak.

Issue #211's "Flashing Wheels" use of an exciting American entertainment, roller derby and its great stunt skaters, promised The Flash in some great stunts of his own. What we got was an alien and a few laps around an empty track.

As for issue #212's "The Flash in Cartoon Land," I don't want to discuss it here. Because it doesn't even show promise, it ruins my theory. My theory? That if Cary gives a bit more consideration to the different ways he can handle these stories, he may make the Flash readable again. Which it hasn't been. Not since Flank Robbins last graced the book with his light, action-packed yarns.

I HAVE A GREAT IDEA FOR A QUALITY, OFFSET FANZINE: A WHOLE MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO GEORGE EVANS, RUSS HEATH, JOHN SEVERIN, JOHN CRAIG, CURT SWAN, ALEX TOTH, AND OTHERS. ALL THESE GUYS ARE SO DAMN GOOD, BUT I RARELY SEE ANYTHING ABOUT THEM.

Graphic Story Magazine has run interviews with Alex Toth (#10) and John Severin (#13). *Squa Tront* #3 and #4 features quite a bit by and on George Evans with the latter ish also featuring an interview with Johnny Craig. I think the other artists you mentioned are in pretty high respect around fandom, too.

Now, if you're talking about the artzines ignoring these men, you're right. I suspect it's because these men don't have time to do fanzine work, their work being highly in demand in the comics field and elsewhere. The artzines, too, are devoted to a certain kind of artist, the Frazetta Fetisher. Fandom is notorious for lionizing certain artists (usually with good cause) to the exclusion of a whole flock of equally talented artists. We hardly ever hear comments on Murphy Anderson anymore, for example. It's something all of us have been guilty of at one time.

NEWS RELEASE:

Tony Isabella celebrated his 20th year of continuous existance on December 22. Spurning invitations to riotous carousing offered by well-meaning friends, Isabella celebrated the day by finishing a column for the highly respected journal, *Comic Fandom Monthly* (the soundtrack to *My Fair Lady* playing whilst he worked), making an hours journey to buy some new comic magazines, and settling down to an uneventful, if restful, evening reading said comics and a handful of fanzines. The young writer retired a few minutes after midnight, secure in the knowledge that the world would still be there when he next awoke.

ANOTHER NEWS RELEASE:

This installment of my column, gang, is a notable one as it marks the first time I got it to Joe before the deadline. Joe has seen everything now!

By the time you read these words, we will be one month in 1972. I'd like to passon my best wishes for the new year. Let's make it the best year yet.

In the meantime, I'll be looking for your letters at 11203 Peony, Cleveland, Ohio. My zip code is 44111. Write soon.

Be gentle with yourself.

TERATOLOGY/MARK EVANIER

Dubious achievement awards of 1971!

Every year, *Esquire* Magazine presents its DUBIOUS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS, the purpose of which seems to be to record certain deeds for posterity and to humiliate the performers of those deeds. I have no desire to *humiliate* anyone. But, then, neither does Don Rickles and that never stopped *him*. So, as we leave 1971 behind us, where it will soon come to be known as the "Good Old Days", I'd like to acknowledge a few significant items in the worlds of comic books and fanzines...

IT TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE!
In his new book, Big Screen, Little Screen, Rex Reed observes that: *"Aquaman and Aqualad are two obvious Marine Marvel underwater homosexuals..."* Mr. Reed also goes on to note that the Road-Runner show is: "A rain bath of violence, physical brutality and sadism in which a poor, pea-brained piece of poultry, sketched to resemble Hermione Gingold, gets electrocuted, stampeded and crucified each week."

LANCE RENTZEL SHALL HEAR OF THIS
In *Etcetera/The Comic Reader #80*, Paul Levitz reports, in an upcoming issue of a *Detective Comic*, "Batgirl will reveal herself to her father..."

MRS. ADAMS SHALL HEAR OF THIS!
In the same issue, Charles Schreck reports that: "The Black Canary, under Neal Adams, became sexier."

JACK KIRBY SHALL HEAR OF THIS!
The Los Angeles *Evening-Outlook* did an article on Mark Evanier, a virtually unknown-college student working on comic books. His current work, the *Outlook* reported, is on a "triple interlocking line of comics: *Captain America, the Forever People, The New Gods*, and *Mr. Miracle."*

CHICKEN SH T AWARD
The *Nostalgia News* censored segments of Bud Plants underground comix list by deleting—letters (i.e. *Big as Comics*).

CUT OUT THE PEPPERONI PIZZA, TONY
At the San Diego Golden State Comic Convention, Tony Isabella awoke from a sound sleep to find seven of his friends dancing around his bed in their underwear.

LEAST FUNNY DON MARTIN CARTOON OF 1971
Mad #144, page 40.

SIXTEEN PAGES IN COLOR FOR $11.95
Leonard Brown, of Collectors (now Bennett's) Book Shop took a full-page ad in *RB-CC* to apologize for, what he termed, "the poor quality of *All In Color For a Dime*" and to offer full refunds for any who wished them. Whether he was right or not, an employee of the store said they had quite a few takers.

WORST MOVIE OF THE YEAR
"The Mephisto Waltz"

HARDEST-TO-FIND MOVIE OF THE YEAR
"The Phantom Tollbooth"

FUNNIEST (UNINTENTIONALLY) MOVIE OF THE YEAR
"Women in Cages"

"THE DIRTY DOZEN" WASN"T A BEDTIME STORY!
On "The Virginia Graham Show," Telly Savalas complained to Carmine Infantino about the *violence* in comic books.

DOWN WITH EL TIO PATINHAS!
A new book, published in Chile, denounces Donald Duck and other Disney characters as *"class enemies"* of Chile's leftist government. Uncle Scrooge is identified as a capitalist exploiter and the authors imply that there are abberant reasons that Donald's nephews have no parents.

RIP-OFF OF THE YEAR: HONORABLE MENTION
A classified ad in *The Buyer's Guide #10* offers to sell, for one dollar, a confidential list of sources where you can buy the first ten issues of *Fantastic Four* for 10cents ea.

KENT STATE OBSESSION AWARD
Iron Man #45 was Gary Friedrich's third tale about protesting students who get killed by law enforcers.

I COULD HAVE SWORN IT WAS ALL REPRINTS!
In *Comic Fandom Monthly #2*, BoB Pinaha talks about the monumental changes made in *Wonder Woman's* book in issue #197 and goes on to note that it's a *Special Issue* because "it contains all new material."

HE MUST BE DEEPLY TOUCHED!
Steven Carlberg's last official act as the Central Mailer of the apa-zine, *Myriad*, was to bestow the honorary title of President to himself.

More Achievements to follow...

WHAT'S UP, DOC?
In *Funnyworld #12*, Bob Clampett tells how he created Bugs Bunny.

WHAT ELSE IS UP, DOC?
In *Take One*, vol. 2 #9, Tex Avery tells how *he* created Bugs Bunny.

THIS IS GETTING RIDICULOUS, DOC!
In the December 19th edition of the *TV TIMES* supplement to the *Los Angeles Times*, Chuck Jones says *he* created Bugs Bunny!

DOESN'T ANYONE WANT CREDIT FOR ELMER FUDD?
In an ad for a new cartooning course, former Warner Brothers story man Bugs Hardaway, the originator of the course, is identified as the creator of Bugs Bunny.

HOW ABOUT YOSEMITE SAM?
In Cecil Smith's television column in the *Los Angeles Times*, Friz Freleng was identified as the creator of Bugs Bunny, Sylvester and Tweety, Porky Pig and the Road Runner.

IT'S ABOUT TIME!
Marvelmania International went out of business.

ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING!
Joe Rubert reprinted the same "Enemy Ace" story in *Star Spangled War Stories # 153* & in *Star-Spangled War Stories #157*.

ONCE MORE, WITHOUT FEELING!
Marvel reprinted the same Don Heck story in *My Love #8* and again in *My Love #14*, making three complete sets of hair styles and fashions drawn for one story.

ONCE MORE, WITHOUT THINKING!
The reason that the Two-Gun Kid story in the fifteenth issue of *Mighty Marvel Western* is incoherent is because it was comprised of two pages from each of three separate Two-Gun Kid stoires.

MOST ASININE PEANUTS MERCHANDISE
Charlie Brown scotch tape dispenser.

MOST ANNOYING COMIC BOOK WRITERS' FAD
Super-hero stories narrated in the second person. (i.e. *"Now your name is Iron Man and the person you were, the playboy industrialist called Stark, fades into the background of your mind. You are in control--You're the master of your destiny..."*).

TWICE IS PLENTY
Castle of Frankenstein is listed as a bi-monthly in the indicia and had averaged two issues a year.

RIP-OFF OF THE YEAR: DISHONORABLE MENTION
Creepy Magazine is now 75 cents.

MOST OVER-PRICED ITEM OF 1971
A dealer at the New York Comic Art Convention was selling Tony Tallarico original art for a dollar a page.

WHAT, NO CHARLES ATLAS AD?
The inside back cover of many recent D.C. comics carried an ad for a Raquel Welch inflatable pillow: "What man wouldn't enjoy spending a night with Raquel Welch? ...made of rugged vinyl to serve as your headrest... Livens up a party when every one sees and feels this great gag item..."

WHAT, NO RAQUEL WELCH PILLOW AD?
A comic fan in Portland, Oregon purchased a copy of *Thor #196* which consisted of no interior pages and thirty-six covers.

FROM THE MAN WHO BROUGHT YOU CAPT. AMERICA
Jack Kirby introduced a new character into the *New Gods*--a Negro paraplegic on skis.

THE KID MEANT WELL
The first question asked of Mike Royer on a panel at the Witchcraft and Sorcery Convention was: *"Can you draw?"*

HE'D NEVER MAKE IT AS AN AVON LADY
At a mini-con held at the home of Bob Koppany, Warren Somers stood on the front steps for forty-five minutes, waiting for someone to let him in.

YOU TELL HIM, HOWARD!
In an interview published in *'Nuff Said #1*, Howard Rogofsky said he never cared for Jim Steranko's artwork in Nick Fury because "the panels were too small in size."

RIGHT ON, HOWARD!
In that same interview, Rogofsky said that Jim Steranko is conceited because he thinks his artwork is the best and that Steranko's work is going downhill.

WAY TO GO, HOWARD!
Also in that interview, Rogofsky complained that Steranko tried to raise money to print his *History* by selling copies of the cover for $2.00 each at the New York Convention.

RIP-OFF OF THE YEAR: JUDGE'S RIBBON
Howard Rogofsky is currently charging $15.00 for a copy of Jim Steranko's *History of the Comics*.

WHEN WE GO, WE'RE TAKING FANDOM WITH US!
The Thompsons published the last *Newfangles*.

A Very Grim Hero

ART MILLER

This month's article is spotlighting a lesser known but still interesting character of the Nedor Comics Group--The Grim Reaper . He began his illustrious career in *Fighting Yank #7*, February, 1944. He then appeared in *America's Biggest Comic Book* and finally he "starred" in *Wonder Comics*. The Grim Reaper appeared in *Wonder #1*, May, 1944 through #17 April, 1948. He appeared in only nineteen or so issues in his career.

After three issues, Richard Hughes, who wrote some of the Grim Reaper tales, decided an origin story was in order. In *Wonder #2* the origin of the Grim Reaper is told. Bill Norris, a young, American student is in Paris to attend college at the Sorbonne. Bill's roommate discovers that the Nazi Army is about to occupy Paris. He urges Bill to leave, but Bill came , he says, to get his education and no one is going to drive him out. The Germans march on Paris and Bill sees an evil looking Nazi beating up a white haired old man. He rushes to the old man's rescue, but is overwhelmed by other Nazi troops. The German court then sentences Bill to a concentration camp along with the old man.

The old man's name is Piere Laroux and the camp guards torture him unmercifully. Pierre does not tell the hated Nazis the information they seek, but as he lies on his bunk in their cell block, Pierre tells Bill that he is the leader of the Underground . Only he knows where a General Morat, a commander of the French Army is hiding. General Morat must escape to organize the battle for the recapture of France. Laroux makes Bill Norris promise to contact the French Underground and relay the information. A few minutes later, Pierre Laroux dies, suffering from the tortures.

Bill tricks his guard into opening the cell door and quickly overpowers him. He then escapes from the concentration camp and secretly makes his way to the headquarters of the French Underground. All the members are under surveillance by the Gestapo except a young man named Delaine who is a new member of the Underground. The information's given to Delaine. As he leaves, a Gestapo officer orders him to halt. Young Delaine panics and runs--the Gestapo officer shoots him down. The other members of the Underground and Bill Norris have seen what has happened. There is no one else to entrust the information. The Underground patriots have given up hope--their cause is lost!

Young Bill Norris then speaks up, "You're forgetting me!!" "I know there's one thing these curs understand--terror!!" "I'm going to be a symbol of that terror!!" The women of the Underground go to work making Bill's "symbol"--a costume sewn to his specifications. A startling figure begins to emerge: dark purple pants and long purple cape with a white skull and cross bones on the back of it, a purple shroud mask covering the eyes and head, a white shirt and white belt with a yellow skull and cross bones buckle. Next dark purple boots (that's right, Purple) are added. Finally, the costumed figure is armed: a .45 caliber pistol, a wicked-looking knife, the hanging rope and a bottle full of chloroform.This had to be one of the best armed super-heroes of the '40's! The eerie form of The Grim Reaper is born! Now, Bill Norris makes a "fateful vow"--"This is a costume of death--may it spell death to the Nazis and their kind and to oppressors everywhere! Watch out you rats--the Grim Reaper is in your midsts! I'll strike without warning-out of the shadows of your own fear-then disappear into the night from which I came!"

The Grim Reaper then began his campaign of terror on the Nazi troops in France. He swoops down at night and quietly knifes and hangs and chloroforms many of the hated, enemies. The elusive Grim Reaper constantly outsmarts the bewildered Gestapo and finally gets General Morat out of France.

In the following issues the eerie spectre of the Grim Reaper continues to wreck havoc on the Nazi Army. He again and again helps the Underground and also raids prison camps to liberate the French fighters. Bill Norris travels to Yugoslavia and, as the Grim Reaper, aids Tito in the defense of his country. After the war, Bill Norris returns to the United States, and as many of the Nedor heroes did, he becomes the nemisis of crime and evil. He fights art crooks in "The Case of the Evil Eye", saves an inventor from the coveters of his inventions in "Design on a Death," and battles crime in such stories as "The Disappearing Room" and "The Empire of Crime." One story that's particularly interesting is called "The Master of Treachery" and is the only story in which the Grim Reaper fights a costumed villian. The bad guy's the Chameleon who looks like a wild rooster. His costume was made up of brown, scaly tight shirt and pants with green briefs and a green hood with a green rooster crest on top of it. The costume was completed with

brown boots and gunbelt. The Chameleon was not too clever even though there were really *four* of them, it only took "The man of the Night" 8 pages to catch them.

The artwork was on an average with many titles of the 1940's. Most of the stories were drawn by Al Camy. The drawing of the Grim Reaper was rather consistant. His costume did not vary until the last couple of issues when his belt and long boots were drawn in black.

I think the Grim Reaper could make a come back now. The stories of today are still of crime and gangsters. Also more stories are slanted toward weird and supernatural type tales. With some good scripting, the "Master of Terror" could fit right in! Can you picture a noose rope whipping out of the inky, black shadows to trap an evil witch or warlock? I wonder...

© 1944 MEDOR

A LOOK AT A FATMAN COMIC

BY GARY BROWN

February of 1967 sent comic fans scrambling to the newsstands in search of a brand new comic book. The book was *Fatman*, and it was published by Milson Publishing Co. Both were new names to the comic industry, but the men behind them were certainly not. "Written and drawn by the creators of the original Captain Marvel - O.O. Binder and C.C. Beck" read the blurb on the cover of *Fatman #1*. That was the reason.

Older fans were anticipating the reincarnation of the *Big Red Cheese*, while younger fans were anxious to see this legendary artist/writer team in action. No one was disapointed. *Fatman* had all the ingredients of a successful comic, both in concept and execution. The sad part, however, was that it lasted only three issues. In the midst of the nostalgia/pop/Batman boom, the title was virtually smothered on the stands.

The first issue of *Fatman* (April 1967) was significant not only in marking the long awaited return of Beck and Binder, but also in that it was 64-pages and cost 25¢. All comics at that time were 15¢ and experiments in packaging were just beginning. Large-size annuals selling for a quarter were quite common and King Features were utilizing the three-in-one, plastic bag method in promoting their comics. Milson decided to price their line of comics at 25¢, and from all indications, this might have been *Fatman's* undoing. After the first issue, distributors asked the company to do something about the shape of the comic. It seems as though operators were having a difficult time noticing the difference between the regular 15¢ books and Milson's 25¢ book with the regular binding. The company ordered their books printed with a bridge on the side, but with the poor sales, and even poorer distribution, it was a short life.

Milson managed to publish a total of five issues of two different titles; three issues of *Fatman* and two issues of a book called *Tod Holton, Super Green Berets*. There were plans for a third book, *Captain Shaaam*, which was to be by Beck and Binder, but it never got past the first script.

As a comic book, Fatman was a pure joy. It smacked of the Beck and Binder humor which made *Captain Marvel* such a classic. It was a super-hero comic which never took itself too seriously. Fatman was actually Van Crawford, a wealthy gourmet, orchid raiser, philanthropist. He gained his super-powers by befriending a little green alien. The alien, it seems, was testing Van to see if he was worthy of the special formula which

Left: Van Crawford as Fatman.
Right: Crawford as Human Flying Saucer

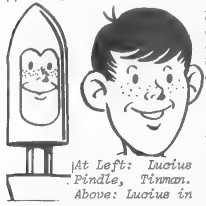
C.C Beck doesn't like to draw violence in comics . . .

would give him quick wit, fast moves (in spite of his bulk), and the ability to change into a flying saucer. Van was happy to drink the formula...*if* he could have it chocolate flavored.

The stories were all in a humorous vein and Beck enjoyed doing the character. It should be noted that Beck pencilled, inked, lettered and colored every story, besides helping with some of the writing and other technical aspects. Once he was sent a story (The Chess Game of Death, *Fatman #3*) with a note saying they could not devise an ending and for Beck to see what he could do. In the long run, he not only came up with an ending, but had to learn how to play chess in order to properly illustrate the story.

The book had various reminders of the character Beck and Binder were so closely associated with. Fatman's cape and costume were very similar to that of Captain Marvel, and a character called Tinman looked suspiciously like one Billy Batson. In the second issue, Van was reading a comic book in his personal library, and on the shelves were bound volumes of *Whiz Comics*, *Marvel Family*, and a copy of *Adam Link* (which, as all good fans know, was written by the Binders.

One interesting fact is the total lack of violence through the books. The first page of the first issue stated, "Every effort is made to insure that this comic magazine contains the highest quality of wholesome entertainment." Only once is Fatman depicted as using his fists, and that was for one brief panel. Beck, who does not like to draw violence in comics and does not believe it belongs there, did his best to make all physical contact as humorous as possible. If he (Fatman) could not use his wits to subdue an opponent, then he used his stomach.



At Left: Lucius Pindle, Tinman. Above: Lucius in his civilian identity. At Right are two of Fatman's villains, Moon Witch and Gnarly Gnome. He later reformed, and became Fatman's aide. With a suit and tie, of course. Art by C.C. Beck

Besides Fatman, there were other characters which were featured regularly in the book. *Tinman* was a skinny lad named Lucius Pindle, who went to great lengths to improve his physical appearance. He finally resorted to chanting an ancient charm and was changed into a bullet-like, tinny knight. He was mostly used as Fatman's pal and a sort of comedy relief.

Beck and Binder always had the knack for creating terrific villains, and Fatman had his share. *Anti-Man* was a large, fish-like monster who terrorized both Fatman and Tinman until his wife (*Mrs. Anti-Man*) interrupted the battle. It seems as though her husband had been neglecting her and their 5,000 children. Anti-Man had told Fatman he was the last of his race and vowed to destroy the human race. "Has he been telling you that ridiculous story human?" replied the enormous Mrs. Anti-Man, "It's all poppycock! Everytime he gets hopped-up on seaweed juice he tells that tale! It's all seafoam!"

There were also villaims such as Brain Man, Moon Witch, Gnarly Gnome, Syntho, Gung Ho, Bug and the Shroud. The nice thing about Beck and Binder villains is that they are never actually evil. For the most part, they are just mean and never out to hurt anyone. It's usually a match of wits rather than force. *(Editor's Note: This is so true, that when Tinman went away to school, Gnarly Gnome became his new partner. How is that as a non-violent villain? --JB)*

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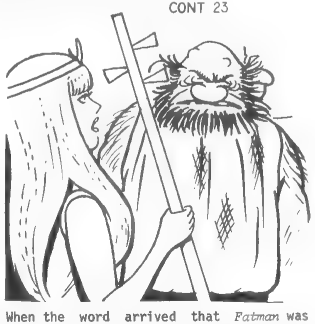


ART © 1967 MILSON

When the word arrived that *Fatman* was cancelled, Beck had just started on the 4th issue. He had managed to letter a story en-

SF AND FANTASY

BY JOE THOMASINO

Bogart fans must be prepared to be delighted or insulted, at least initially in reading *Space For Hire* by William F. Nolan. This entertaining effort brings us the character of Sam Space(put on your thinking caps *Maltese Falcon* viewers), a hardbitten private detective in an interstellar setting. Through clever twisting of old chiches into new gems plus some imaginative plotting and background utilizing parallel universes, time travel, beautiful aliens and even a technique for brain changing. Mr. Nolan's presenting us with a firstclass piece of escapist sci-fi. True it is not *Way Station, The World of Null-A* or any other of the great classics of science fiction but it does succeed well in being part of what the publisher's blurb says it is, *"A wacky look at crime in space..."*.

The story deals with Space's efforts to protect Dr. Umani, expert brain changer and vital scientist from the attacks of vicious thugs of varied description trying to destroy all of the scientist's spare bodies, which he can change his brain into, and thus permanently neutralize this man. Eventually through several interesting adventures involving parallel universes, planets full of sentient mice, brain changes galore, torture dungeons, mechanical dragons and a vast array of futuristic weaponry all precisely described, the protagonist discovers what is really going on and acts to save the day. Enough said about plot, as this is a good yarn which depends heavily on its well-planned twists. I'll not spoil it. However I would like to take issue with the second part of the publisher's blurb mentioned above which is in full, *"A wacky look at crime in space, in the dark tradition of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr."*.

As a rule, publisher's blurbs are inaccurate at least, always exaggerated and generally to be over looked. In this case it is such a non-sequitor it is infuriating. First what is Kurt Vonnegut's tradition? I was unaware he had one let alone deserves one. With the possible exception of *Slaughter House 5*, which is surreal mainstream fiction and not sci-fi by any stretch of the imagination, his work is hardly qualified to be formed into a tradition, dark or otherwise. Two examples of his work, *The Sirens of Titan* and *Cat's Cradle*, would pull the rug from under any would-be tradition makers. *The Sirens of Titan* is an insipid tale which in the end has old men, women and children attacking the Earth and being slaughtered by the inhabitants. *Cat's Cradle* is a doomsday story involving Ice-9 a substance which can crystallize the world. Each of these is enough to turn your stomach. It's true that there is *some* humor and insight in each of these novels, but they are so well-covered with a patina of heavy-handed moralizing, holier-than-thou attitudes and covert sermonizing that their effect is lost. Mr. Vonnegut's work has always been a great disappointment to me. Even on those occasions when he does have a genuinely valuable message to impart, he so destroys it with cliche and thick-fingered overtones as to make it unpalatable. Some readers believe that there are two types of novel, one which is putting a message across and the other which is merely for enjoyment of the writers skill in presenting a situation, characters, and background. In *Space For Hire* Mister Nolan falls in to the latter category and does an excellent job. To my knowledge Mr. Vonnegut has always been in the first category and turned out an inferior product. In his zeal to show us the way,Vonnegut has forgotten the essentials of good writing, namely turning out an entertaining as well as meaningful piece of fiction. Although it may be said that Vonnegut has a dark tradition it can only be said in the sense that the glowing sparks of his genius are submerged beneath the dark trappings of triteness and poor technique in attempting to hammer home his homily.

When one evaluates *Space For Hire* one must over-look the disservice the publisher does to this book by comparing the excellent enjoyment writer Nolan, with the poor message novel writer, Vonnegut. This book is an excellent piece of science-fiction which I heartily recommend. I am looking forward to more of the same from Mr Nolan, hopefully not starting out with the disadvantage of being compared to something it does not faintly resemble.

ABOUT THE BOOK

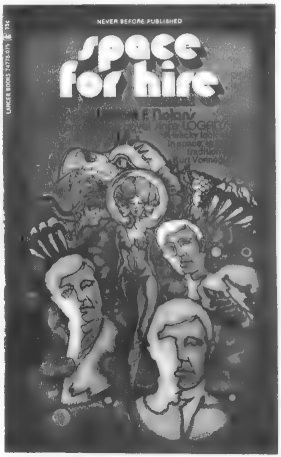
SPACE FOR HIRE is Copyright (C), 1971 by William F. Nolan. 75¢, 174 pages. Published by Lancer Books, Incorporated, 1560 Broadway, New York, New York, 10036. Book number: 74778-075. Cover by Vayaze. It is not published in hardback edition.

A LOOK AT FATMAN CONT

titled "The Secret of Ali Ben Raja", which featured a singing group called *The Garbage Collectors* ("Don't throw my heart in an ash can b-a-a-by!").

Certainly *Fatman* was far from the financial success that Milson had hoped for, but it did succeed in six more months of Beck and Binder. The magic was still there. It was not the type of book that played on the intellectual prowess of the reader or tried to stun art critics with masterful drawings. *Fatman*, much like *Captain Marvel*, was just a character in a comic book. He was comical and entertaining. He was...well, he was just fun to read about. Perhaps it is good to sit back and read yourself into a fantasy world that tries to ignore violence and hatred . Perhaps it is good to see the *good old days* return, along with the people who made them good. But most of all, *Fatman*, *Captain Marvel*, C.C. Beck and Otto Binder have given us something to enjoy and remember. No one can take that away.

"Er...ah...Hmmm! What's for supper mother?"
Fatman



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THE UNFANZINES

A MALIN&
G BERMAN

This month we'd like to start by making some corrections on last issue's Fan-Calendar. Creation will not be held at the New Yorker this year. It was sold and a hospital is being built on its site. Most likely it'll be moved to the Statler-Hilton hotel, or another well-known one in Manhattan. The Easter-Con is cancelled. The date was prohibitive for organization and planning. Also, there is a new convention planned for the Columbus Day Weekend, devoted to comics, sf, and fantasy. It will be in Manhattan, but we can't let out anything more than that out right now.

Also, last issue, Tony Isabella contended our statement that BPP zines aren't representative of fanzine publishers today. We feel we must stick to our belief. True, they are a *big* part of fanzines, but not the *major* portion. The best known, most widely read and most talked about zines today are the near prozines. WE, in our reviews, will not leave out the publications which contain only fan work; our predecessor almost completely ignored the pro-zines on the other hand. We won't be selective in our reviewing pro or art zines, nor will we ignore the fan fanzines.

On Comic Fandom Monthly...

We're glad to see that some of the writers are beginning to stray away from articles on just comic. While this is the original purpose of CFM, I wouldn't mind seeing a little variety--reviews of movies, television or other related topics. This would help to round out the book, and most of the readers are probably interested in these topics as much or nearly as much as comics. (*Editor's Note: Mayhaps you'd like a centerfold, too? --JB*)

Reviews this month...

Fandom's Fanzine #1: 25¢ from Emanuel Maris, 316 West 88th Street, New York, New York, 11365. This magazine hopes to become a new *Newfangles*, with less news, more art and more articles. By this I mean that their information and news is presented in *Newfangles* style, putting as much as possible in, forsaking neatness and continuity at times. The news jumps from Second Sunday, to *Monster Times*, to the Star Trek Con, to comics, back to Second Sunday, and so on. But, it certainly doesn't miss covering a large and varied amount of interesting topics. As time goes on, the reporting of news should improve. Also included, an interview with Joe Kubert, which ends abruptly. It was interesting while it did last. Articles on Miss Liberty and Captain Action were both informal, but the Action article grated on our collective nerves. We dislike articles that do nothing but review a character by re-hashing it's stories.

Fandom's Fanzine is a worthwhile effort. It is slated as a bi-weekly (Maris and Canadian Nark Siegle alternate issues). If we understood correctly, it is being sold on some newsstands and bookstores. This should help improve the spread of news. Our suggestions, though, would be to improve the layout and the addition of a table of contents.

Rocket's Blast Comicollector #86: The latest addition to our evergrowing piles of RBCC's is nicely done, and compares well to previous issues. In reality, the publication is not totally in the hands of Love anymore. The advertisers comprise the majority of the book. While it may seem offbest a little, the ads this issue have improved *Rocket's Blast's* appearance. And this is a very good sign for fandom. It's about time the dealers realized that neatness does count and that the look of their ads are fandom's only way to decide if the product's worth buying.

Berni Wrightson's color cover is RBCC's best to date. The regular features are well done, though we're wondering where *Collector Comments* and *Blasts From The Readers* went in this issue. RBCC remains a dependable & useful item, and a welcome addition to fandom.

Rooket's Blast Comicollector, sample copy $1 from The SFCA, 9875 SW 212 Street, Miami, Florida, 33157.

Books and Things

Comix: A History of Comic Books in America: $7.95 at most bookstores, written by Les Daniels. As stated in the foreword, most of the books printed on the history of comic books deal solely with the golden age, completely disregarding everything done after 1945 or so. This hardcover book, however, contains not only your typical *(ed. note: and inaccurate)* golden age section, then goes into detail on EC, Marvel, the comic Code Authority, undergrounds and more. Each of the major sections is followed by a reprint, summing up the statements made in the

preceeding chapter. Particularly interesting to us was the chapter on EC. It covers the period very well, and details the period pretty heavily. Also of special interest is the chapter on undergrounds, the first such indepth coverage of the undergrounds we've seen.

The artwork throughout is clearly reproduced and fairly well chosen. We thought the cover design could have been better, but that same problem plagued [illegible] *Dime*. $7.95 is a lot of money to plunk down for a book, even for a hardback, and even in a book this good. If you can wait, perhaps, the publishers will cut the price.

Next issue's reviews will cover *Phase*, which is now ready, the SFCA's *Collage*, the *EC Horror Library* and others.

This last part of our column deals with a satire that was done on INFINITY, our magazine. This lampoon was done by two of GEORGE'S editor's, Bob Napier and Jim Vadebonoeur. While it was well-done and quite humorous, many of the jokes were based on falsehoods and unfortunately, the readers of this publication will not be able to distinguish between jokes in good humor, or those done in poor taste. This magazine was done completely without our knowledge or consent, and this is one of the reasons we feel it is unfair. Their future plans call for continued lampoons, in which they intend to "hit harder". We sincerely feel that it isn't their place to "hit" fanzines they do not like or disagree with, and this is why we're calling for a halt to publication of future lampoons, as they could only be harmful to fandom as a whole. We hope Jim and Robert take our advice.

FANZINE WATCH

Comic Comments, Gary Brown, 5430 West 6th Ct., Hialeah, Fla. 33012. 25¢ Excellent news fanzine, but going out of business with latest issue. The editor will be taking over a new zine. Ask about it when you pick up a copy of *Comic Comments*.

Fandom Unlimited, RD Larson, 774 Vistas-Grande, Los Altos, Ca. 94022. $1. A genzine and the Duffy's Tavern and Dr. Wertham interview may be worth price of admission.

Yellow Balloon, Richard Small, 117 S.Meridan St #3, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301. Rich's attempting to make his *Capa-Alpha* (apa) contributions generally available and understandable. 15 cents each or 7/$1. Those unfamiliar with apas may find some revelations here.

Our Mistake!

Editor's Note: In CFM #4, we ran "Tarzan Swings To New Hut". Unfortunately, as we are sure you know, we underestimated Gold Key. Author John Rose explains:

A few days after CFM #4 hit the stands I was making my usual check of the comics rack and I found *Korak #45*. My piece stated that, #44 was the final Gold Key issue. I was misinformed.

The first week of last December brought *Tarzan of the Apes #205*. I was told #205 was to be the last. Now, though I'm wondering if there'll be another issue of *March of Comics Tarzan*! If so, that would make my article premature on three counts. Being a real Tarzan fan, I'd welcome all three. (If there is any type of fan more fannish than a comics fan, it's a Tarzan/ERB fan!)

Korak #46, art by Dan Spiegle, was more of the same that we've been getting. But in *Tarzan #206* Gold Key made a surprise move. They went back to the Burroughs novels and did an adaption of *Tarzan and the Lion Man*. The story, drawn by Paul Norris, was 20 pages in length, as usual, but that is very short for doing a full length Burroughs novel. Checking back over the Tarzan novels, Western has now pictured all but four of the original 25 books. Those remaining are: *Tarzan and The Leopard Men, Tarzan the Magnificent, Tarzan and the Madman* and *Tarzan and the Castaways*. Perhaps DC has slated one or two of these.

Camille Cazedessus' *ERB-dom* has twice mentioned that distribution of *Tarzan* and *Korak* comics has been poor for the last few issues. This may be true in some areas and some of these issues may not be too plentiful. Collectors take note.

Speaking of circulation, reports printed in the Gold Key *Tarzan* comic magazine indicate 1971 as the lowest year print run wise in history. The 363,916 are the lowest number of copies reported since the inception of public circulation figures in 1963.

The '67 run of 765, 307 copies, double of the number printed in 1971, was the highest. In all probability, the Ron Ely *Tarzan T.V.* series which ran then, and the exceptional art on the book was the explanation.

Korak's figures were printed only from 1965-1969. During that period the magazine remained fairly consistant, going from 455,942 (1967) to 398,504. It is safe to assume *Korak's* run was also cut in 1971. Meanwhile, DC's first *Tarzan* is slated for Feb. 29th.

OK, THE EDITOR'S UGLY, BUT WE ARE NOT SELLING HIM. . .YET!

What does it take to survive in comic book fandom? Well, start with a smattering of Tony Isabella's WANDERING FAN, a little of Mark Evanier's TERATOLOGY, a dash of BEARD MUTTERINGS by Norman Masters, a pinch of Mike Raub's & APA-WATCH, a half-pound of Cliff Letovsky's VIEW FROM CANADA, a SOUNDING BOARD by Stan Clish, some SCI-FI AND FANTASY by Joe Thomasino, a little JACH SPAKE by Jeff Wasserman some dashes of Adam Malin, Bob Pinaha, Wally Stoelting, Gary Berman, Art Miller and Gary Brown, give it to Joe Brancatelli and "Jakey" Jenkins to edit, and serve it on a monthly basis, and you have got COMIC FANDOM MONTHLY. Every month CFM brings you fandom's best writers in large in-depth doses and gives you some needed relief from art-zine headache. Get fandom's only monthly article|zine, CFM.

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Y'know, fandom has been crying for years about the recognition that it deserves. Now that it's got it, I wonder, is it worth it?

I'd like to take a moment if I may to ask you for your help. Will anyone taking the FAMOUS ARTISTS HOME CORRESPONDENCE COURSE please write me at 24 Patton Drive, Sayreville, N.J. 08872. It's of a personal nature and has nothing whatsoever to do with CFM.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We at *Comic Fandom Monthly* feel very strongly about the amount of price hikes that have hit fandom lately. Most fans tend to blame a singular dealer for this. It is not the work of one man. The only solution to this problem is not to buy overpriced comic books. When they don't sell the price will drop in very short order. Then buy.

Illustration Copyright (C) 1970, Capitalist Reporter.

VIEW FROM CANADA, CONT

tures of Speed Savage. Savage is a creation of Bell Features. They are reported to be developing a new series of Canadian comics using updated heroes and situations from the Canadian Whites. Also planned is a full-length color feature called *Johnny Canuk : Chained to Freedom.*

SHORT NEWS AND NOTES:

*Classics Bookstore in Montreal have been carrying a variety of underground comics at 40 cents each. Also available is the first volume of STERANKO'S HISTORY OF COMICS...*George Henderson will be Canadian distributor of the *Spirit Magazine.* As far as we know, plans are coming along, and it should be out this year...*Rodicks Bookstore in Montreal, has a vintage copy of CARTOONING FOR THE NEWSPAPERS. It's nice and complete and is going for $8...*Frank Shuster (of the Canadian comedy team Wayne and Shuster) is a cousin of Joe Shuster, co-creator of Superman.. *I mentioned that I would review PHENIX when I came across a copy. It is incredible. I submit it as the best PRO-ZINE (too good for a fan-zine, not actually a professional magazine, thus making it somewhat undefinable) on comic art produced today. It's available from it's U.S. distributor Fred Patton at 11863 West Jefferson Boulevard, Apt. One, Culver City, California, 90230. The only bad thing about PHENIX is that it's in French, and unless you're familiar with the language you'll have problems... Main Mise8* hit a few stands and reviewed in the *Montreal Star* newspaper. The short review by Jean Remple seemed favourable...*LE SOLEIL (Quebec City's main newspaper) is reported to have a strip by Pierre Thiercult. He is doing a strip, which when translated means THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN. Supposedly, it's in Steranko's NICK FURY, AGENT OF SHIELD vein. When I bought a copy, there was no strip, much to my dismay. It wasn't a total loss, as it had a fairly good article on BD.*

As I mentioned last issue, I need correspondants to keep this column going. Please. Thanks this issue go to: Ron Kasman, Richard Langlois, Ralph Alphonso and the *QPS Bulletin,* Pierre Fournier, Fernand Morin and Ken Steacy. I still need Canadian news items, so please write me at:

Cliff Letovsky.
17 Holly Road
Hampstead 254, PQ
Montreal Canada

I guarentee an answer.

Quark: Speculative Fiction Lives

CLIFF & SUSAN BIGGERS

All fiction is speculative.
Its tools are words, and its building process is human thought or imagination. Its point of view is the distorting glass of the writer's mind.
Quark is a tribute to imagination.
---Samuel R. Delany & Marilyn Hacker
Quark 2

New Worlds, under the hands of Michael Moorcock, folded in 1970, after a run of almost twenty five years in England. Under Moorcock, *New Worlds* had built up a reputation as a *new wave* science-fiction (or speculative fiction) digest; on its demise there was no popular sf digest for new wave fiction--leaving writers like Ellison and Sturgeon few places to turn with the exception of such non-fiction magazines as Penthouse and Playboy, and the two magazines edited by Ted White: *Amazing* or *Fantastic*.

Dangerous Visions set the trends; *New Worlds* followed it in England. Samuel Delany was intent to bring the trend to the United States. A monthly or bimonthly magazine/digest wasn't viable, particularly with the digest distribution problems in many areas of the country, and the poor handling where the digests *are* distributed. Finally, after hearing on and off about Delany's dream, the project came about--under the Paperback Library label, and as a quarterly of *speculative fiction*. Not *science fiction*; Delany was intent in his first editorial to point out the difference to any readers. Delany's quarterly was willing to view meaningfully the social, psychological, and technological crises affecting us, and encourage as much experimentation as possible.

Quark 1 came out rather uneventfully in November 1970, and has followed it's quarterly schedule since. Delany's editing hand is delicate indeed--writers have almost free reign with what they like, and the result is more of a modern anthology of some of the finest speculative fiction done to date--done by such non-speculative fiction names as Brunner, Le Guin and Russ. Quality in *Quark* varies from issue to issue; no writers can really be classified as a steady author; Lafferty comes closest in that respect, having something or other in a good many of the books. *Quark* tries to stick to a digest formula to a degree; editorial at the beginning, some stories interspersed with a little art and poetry by various relative unknowns, and some nice covers that are credited, which is an oddity in itself in a paperback. There's little science fiction (as known in the purists form) to be found, a lot of the stories wouldn't even be classified as sci-fi at all, such as Thomas Dish's bizarre "Let Us Hasten to the Gates of Ivory" in *Quark 1*. Its a story about two people lost in a cemetery, and unable to get out, no matter how far they walk; and some stories are very science fiction, like R.A. Lafferty's "Encased In Ancient Kind" in *Quark #3*, about a few people living in the future who band together to try to make an illegal flight above the Canopy--a smog covering that blocks the sun from the earth almost entirely. The artists are local, usually underground; the poetry is unique, thought-provoking and not the story-telling pot-boiler type that *cutesy* writers do for *Analog*.

All in all, *Quark* has proven in its first four issues to be a noteworthy paperback/magazine. The stories usually maintain a high quality all through, unlike most digests in which the feature story is fine, and the others are real bummers, thrown in because the writer is the editor's brother-in-law, or some such. Ted White remarked in an editorial that he would have turned down 75% of the material used in *Quark*--from the lack of good material in either of his magazines (excepting art), I'd say he must have already done so--to Samuel Delany and Marilyn Hacker's advantage. *Analog* wouldn't have touched most of the stuff in the first four issues of *Quark*; then again a speculative fiction fan would not touch *Analog* anyway, so it's mutual benefit.

We mentioned *New Worlds* way back at the beginning of this piece. What's really interesting is the mention of its demise in 1970--a false demise, sort of catatonic state. *Worlds* is back, and has widespread, great distribution in the United States and throughout most of England. Its in the form of a paperback put out by Berkley Medallion, also a quarterly, thus putting *New Worlds* and *Quark* on equal competition.

New Worlds set out to be a combination of the old digest and the formula *Quark* develo-

ped for a good paperback quarterly--Moorcock took advantage of some good years as editor to put out a fantastically good issue. *New Worlds* paperback was almost a year behind *Quark* in going to paperback form--NW one is dated September 1971, but made up the lag with a near perfect first issue. *New Worlds* tends more towards the science-fiction aspect of speculative fiction, and the variety therefore isn't as wide as the variety found in *Quark*, but NW forms an enjoyable, entertaining half-way point between hard-core science-fiction fans and more liberal speculative fiction fans.

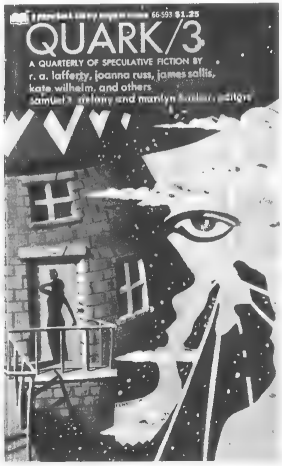
Mervyn Peake does some nice illustrations throughout the book (NW follows the SF digest format of an illustration for just about every story, and no illustrations a basis in text cannot be found for. Limits artistic subjects, but serves to highlight otherwise blah fiction--particularly the Aldiss material appearing in this first issue of NW, which is nothing without the illustration, and very little with.

Keith Roberts proves he can draw (quite well) as well as write (quite well), & John Harrison does a few book reviews (well handled reviews, too, which is more than can be said for any sf digest outside of the two White edited digests) on not so recent sf releases. Dated but still enjoyable.

ABOUT THE BOOK...

Quark is a quarterly digest in paperback. Published on a quarterly basis by Paperback Library (Division of Coronet Communications), 315 Park Avenue, New York, New York, 10010. *Quark* is Copyright, (C), in 1972, Paperback Library, Coronet Communications and Kinney National.

a paperback library original review
66530 $1.25
QUARK/2
A quarterly review of speculative fiction by John Brunner, Thomas Disch, Carol Emshwiller, Philip José Farmer, Fritz Lieber, James Sallis and others.
Edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker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QUARK/3
A QUARTERLY OF SPECULATIVE FICTION BY
r. a. lafferty, joanna russ, james sallis, kate wilhelm, and others
samuel r. delany and marilyn hacker, editors

RIGHT ON! with·····

NEWCON '72

NEW ENGLAND COMIC ART CONVENTION

It's true! Labor Day Weekend, 1972, will mark the occasion of the 1st annual New England Comic Art Convention, sponsored by the top fans, dealers, and professionals in the N.E. area. As of this moment, the exact program is tentative, since the con is still a year away and in the planning stages- - - one thing you can count on though, is that in many ways, this will be one of the very best comic conventions ever. The con committee has already decided on a number of exciting innovations.

But enough general information, and down to the things already definite.

WHERE: The Luxurious SHERATON BOSTON. Located at the fabulous PRUDENTIAL CENTER, the Sheraton is mere minutes away from various transportation centers. Not only that- - the convention committee has persuaded the hotel to hold the room rates for this, Boston's finest hotel, to the same price granted fans attending this year's science fiction con. Room rates are as follows:

Single Studio: $19.00	Twin Min. : $25.00
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Another good point: parking is free for registered guests under the hotel
WHEN: SEPT 2, 3, 4. (Labor Day Weekend)

HOW TO JOIN: To become a member of the convention, send $2.50 to Con address given below. After Aug. 1st, membership will be $3.00. For more information, write the Convention committee, which will be happy to send flyers, and answer questions concerning advertising rates in the program book, rates for dealer's tables (LOW!) etc.

Name _____ ☐ Enroll me as a member of the NEWCON. Enclosed is a check for $2.50

Address _____ ☐ Don't think I can make it, but enroll me as a supporting member. I like to help out, and besides, I dig getting the progress reports and program books, etc. $1.

_____ ☐ I'm the cautious type. Send more information as soon as it becomes available.

NEWCON/P.O. BOX 3184/BROCKTON, MASSACHUSETTS/02403/

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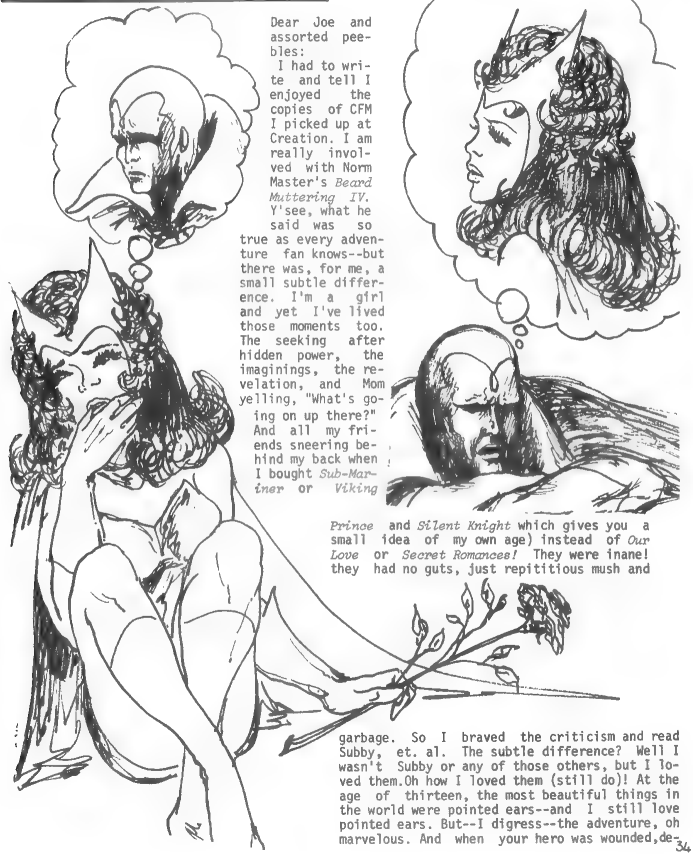

Dear Joe and assorted peebles:

I had to write and tell I enjoyed the copies of CFM I picked up at Creation. I am really involved with Norm Master's *Beard Muttering IV.* Y'see, what he said was so true as every adventure fan knows--but there was, for me, a small subtle difference. I'm a girl and yet I've lived those moments too. The seeking after hidden power, the imaginings, the revelation, and Mom yelling, "What's going on up there?" And all my friends sneering behind my back when I bought *Sub-Mariner* or *Viking Prince* and *Silent Knight* which gives you a small idea of my own age) instead of *Our Love* or *Secret Romances!* They were inane! they had no guts, just repititious mush and garbage. So I braved the criticism and read Subby, et. al. The subtle difference? Well I wasn't Subby or any of those others, but I loved them.Oh how I loved them (still do)! At the age of thirteen, the most beautiful things in the world were pointed ears--and I still love pointed ears. But--I digress--the adventure, oh marvelous. And when your hero was wounded,de-

stroyed, or nearly killed, you gathered him gently into your arms and SOMEHOW saved him to fight another day for you. Or, sadly, not for you, but you loved him still.

Yes, Norm, Roy Thomas understands the hero's anguish and joy and hate and bittersweet passion; but he (simply because he's a man) does not know the workings of a woman's heart. If Karen Page had REALLY loved Matt this whole mess that's graced the latest issues of DD would never had taken place. *Nothing* would've mattered but that guy in her arms, and if swinging around town getting shot at was part of him, and made him happy--so be it. She'd have loved him as he was--no changes. But either Roy didn't understand a woman would react like this or didn't realize the illusion of "true" love he had built around Karen. If she had loved Matt as much as we were led to believe she couldn't have asked Matt to quit.

This is not a disparagement of Roy, he is great and does his male best I suppose. But he is only a man. Girls don't buy superhero mags because we are not real. We are idealized, or talked down to. Who wants to read a bunch of lies about yourself.

Roy Thomas knew--the male view--but could only surmise female views and was often in terrible error. I hope marriage has given him an insight into female psyche because if he messes up Wanda and Vis, I for one'll march on 625 Madison Avenue and throttle him.

Y'see, I am Wanda--sort of. I LOVE the Vision. I cry in my sleep at his lonliness and disorientation. IF I WERE WANDA, NOTHING could keep me from gently teaching him that structure of cells is no reason not to feel, to love and allow

LETTERS

yourself to be loved. Roy's let her dawdle too long. No gal with an ounce of sensitivity would let the guy she loves wallow in such openly obvious lonliness just because he's afraid to feel love (or in this case, *thinks* he CAN'T feel.)

Roy (and Stan & Gerry & the rest) just do not understand. Who wants to read these lies about one's own feelings. As I said they did try, but are just males.

Yes, Norm, there are some girls who have been through the trials you mentioned. There are Black Widows and Medusas of female fandom--we just don't publicize it. It's much too painful.

Ed: Sometimes letters like this come in and you don't exactly know what to do. This letter, in it's original form, was four onion skin pages. The text was in purple flair, and these illustrations were in the margins. The envelope had a four-color, absolutely beautiful Wanda/Vision drawing. It sort of stunned me. People draw on envelopes, but this was unbelievable. I don't know this lady and her name was unreadable. But this letter says a lot about why people read comics, and why people publish fanzines. --JB

ALAN LIGHT REPLIES

And now...to the main point of your editorial comments and this letter. I plead guilty to the charge of trying to make money on printing other fanzines. That sounds pretty bad, but there is, as *always*, a reason for the action. I loathe asking fans to pay for advance orders of practically everything I put out, just because Dynapubs doesn't have enough money to go ahead and print it up. Much as I know the magazine or record or poster will eventually be paid off, I still have to have readers send in advance orders simply because of economics! This causes bookwork, more of my time, readers waiting for ordered products, and many other little problems. I hoped that this could help TBG and Dynapubs get a little ahead and have cash for investment in this type of thing, instead of asking for advance orders. But, you say, does this justify charging more to fanzine publishers? I've known over a dozen fan publishers -- that have paid *considerably* more on printing than what I was charging *even with the added cost* to me. I felt that the prices were still very much lower than any local printer (on the average) where that fan publisher lived. I hope you can see this.

A project such as TBG and Dynapubs is not easy to maintain. And while fans may only see a finished product (such as TBG) I do not think they realize the problems and work that enters in. They can't, in most cases. So when criticism like this comes (over Offset Print Shop in this case) there is a reason, often overlooked, for doing it other trying to soak as much loot out of fandom as possible. --Alan Light

Ed: One only wants to know whether Mr. Light would let an embezzler who stole a million dollars off the hook because he knew of an embezzler who grabbed two million. I think not. That's why I can't accept an explanation that justifies overcharging because another person is charging even more. What do you expect us to do, roll over and play dead to that arguement Alan?

We also can't see why a prospective fan publisher should have to pay for Dynapubs zines. You haven't exactly bowled us over with renovations. TBG still runs 24 (or48 regular sized pages) while RBCC carries 100 to 150 a month. FANTASTIC FANZINE, while being an occasionally interesting zine has always been overpriced and outdated by publication.Neither are deserving of soaking other zine editors. And, Al, anytime you want to swap TBG for CFM for a month, I'm game. I bet CFM will take more work than CFM! --JB

I've really enjoyed CFM since its conception. Your writers are getting better a grip on themselves continually. I hope you keep your issues in the reduced style , as seen in CFM #4. I do have one suggestion, though, why not try to get Roy Thomas to do monthly articles for you? --J.R. Schroeder

Ed: Assuming Roy was even interested in doing a column in CFM, where would he find the time? Personally, if Roy had free time, I'd rather see ALTER-EGO than him doing a CFM column. And I'd rather see him scripting for Marvel than seeing ALTER-EGO. Sure, as an editor I'd love to have Roy, but as a fan I'd rather read his comics! -JB

CFM #4 maintained the same great quality established in the previous three issues. Still I'd like to make a suggestion. How's about a column on the *Letter Column Regulars* like Evanier, Isabella, Vartanoff, Pasko, Graham, Rozakis etc. These guys are also an important part of fandom. Even though Mark and Tony are *retired*,at one time they were in the columns an awful lot. ---Joe Farara

Ed: Mark and Tony are retired? ---JB

HAPPENINGS

Despite many complaints about *Newfanglee* towards the end, the Thompsons always managed to get those small offbeat items that never seem to get in other zines. Well we intend to pick up the slack. If you've got items to give us about anything related to the field, put it on a postcard, and let us know. Okay? The only difference between CFM & *Newfanglee* is that we don't have grudges against Camine Infantino.// *Changing Times* for January 1972 had a one-pager on comics. Emphasis on Al Light and Gary Groth attests to the lacklustre calibre of reportage.//Scuttlebutt around Phil Seuling's *Second Sunday* was that Ron Barlow has found Ghastly Graham Ingels and he'll be at the Memorial day EC Con. // Chuck McNaughton brought issue of *Monster Times* to aformentioned fan clave and made an instant hit.//*Green Lantern* paperback is out on some stands. Paul Levitz found 3 copies, in a local drugstore, bought one for me, and my copy was ripped-off at Second Sunday. DC had no copies as of January 8.//Mark Hanerfeld quit DC and fandom. Sold whole collection and is off to Europe.//Mark Sigal dropped out of Manny Maris' *Fandom's Fanzine*. It is now monthly rather than bi-weekly.// Jeff Jones cover on *Wonder Woman #189* has books going for 50¢ already.// *George* editors Napier and Vadeboncoeur did a very funny parody of *Infinity* called *Inanity*. Editors Malin and Berman were mad, but it was a great job.// Al Capp started a 90-minute weekly TV talk show. Guests are people who he "wildly disagrees with." Producer is Hal Parets, who produced Joe Pyne's late show.// *Editor& Publisher* for 11 December 1971 had an article on *Mutt & Jeff* artist Al Smith. Carried a self-portrait.// Circulation figures for DC list National Per. in publisher's position. A *Newfanglee #55* may be forthcoming just to report this.//*Little Annie Fanny*, has been on stands about a month now, and for $2.50 it has beautiful colored interiors and covers. Art by Kurtzman, Heath, Elder, Frazetta, etc. Jack Davis work stands out. //Ripley's Believe or Not Museum is closing. //Ditko is not doing anything for DC. He apparently didn't like the strip.//Latest *BC* book by Johnny Hart is *BC on The Rocks*. It's from Fawcett, 50¢//Stan Lee brought his gang into New York on a tremendous wave of publicity. In early December, a local NBC outlet did a three minute film clip on the Australian illusionist Geoff Crozier who was at Evening. *Cold Duck*, New York University 's newspaper ran a terrible article on Lee. The writers were typical Marvel freaks, and had dialog as: *"I read your letter in Mister Miracle #5," "I had a letter printed in Hulk once."* Absolutely frightening. The *Sunday News* of 2 January 1972 ran three pager, article on Stan Lee in coloroto section of paper. Loaded with good color reproductions, of Thor, Iron Man plus covers of *DD, Capt. America* and *Fantastic Four*. Article was mildy amusing. The crusher though, was the only review Lee got in a N.Y. Daily. The *New York Post* of 6 January .1972 panned the Lee evening in an unby-lined article. An excerpt or two: *"...At best, it was a trade show for comic freaks." "The audience was composed of largely 13-year old hippies, paniced trendies confronted with a thin season, and intanately somber gentlemen in horn-rimmed glasses..." "In fact, it was his (Roy Thomas') appearance that actually halted the blitz of paper airplanes made from Marvel comics covers that had been criss-crossing the auditorium."* New York writers know a shill when they see one.// Jack Davis has done a full-color ad for a local horror show. It's of a monster eating popcorn.//*Yipwees*, a strip depicting known figures in childhood, started 10 January 1972. Art by Jack Wohl (*Pixies*).//Alan Light sends an article from the *Daily Dispatch* of 7 January 1972 talking about Metropolis, Illonois. You can figure the overtones.// Alan Light also has killed the Offset Print Shop we have been bitching about.

STRIPS, con't.

city of Pittsburg, Penna. also has a humor strip called "Brass Hats" and runs exclusively in the *Pittsburg Press*. Ralph Brem, the paper's managing editor does the writing, which is illustrated by Chuck Livolsi, a staff artist.

The strip's an incisive look at local and national politics and personalities. The whole idea of the strip is that nearly everything that affects the world affect Pittsburg. So, while it's a strip set in Pittsburg, the appeal is nationwide.

Brem says that all he wants to do with "Brass Hats" is to make some sort of editorial comment that will get people thinking, and if it gets a laugh, so much the better. "Brass Hats" over the years has come to mean a dominant figure, thus the name .

Over the years, home-grown strips have not been too numerous. For that matter, a high quality strip is almost impossible to find anywhere. One hopes that this trend to localism will breath some life into a terribly sick industry.

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